Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT MORGAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

February 27, 2006

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between LEA programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in Morgan School District on November 8-9, 2005, included student record reviews, interviews with school and district administrators, related service professionals, teachers, parents, and students. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from Morgan School District and members of the Steering Committee.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- Related service personnel in Morgan School District have a good understanding of their role on the special education team and have developed a good working rapport with school administrators, staff, students, and families.
- General education teachers support students with disabilities in the general education classroom by determining their individual needs and utilizing instructional strategies with students who are experiencing difficulties.
- Students with disabilities are included in non-curricular activities, such as sports team, choir, drama, and school clubs.
- Special education files were very well organized.
- Specialized instruction was evident in general education classrooms; specialized instruction is often supported by paraprofessionals.
- Students expressed feeling motivated by their special education services.
- Availability and use of a licensed, clinical social worker in schools is appreciated by students, parents, and staff.
- General education and special education personnel collaborate within each school.
- Morgan School District is willing to utilize state agencies and others for training and support.
- Morgan School District has a strong focus on academics that has been shared with and supported by the teachers.

Parent Involvement

- Parents report receiving notification of IEP meetings by phone or letter.
- Parents feel they have a strong and valued role in their child's IEP with a priority of expressing their student's needs and any concerns.
- Strengths of the special education program, as listed by surveyed parents, include: building a student's self-esteem and caring, helpful staff.
- Morgan School District invited each parent of a student with a disability to the parent focus group.
- Parents feel that the school district facilitated and respected their involvement in their student's education.
- Parents reported receiving copies of IEPs and Evaluation Summary Reports. File reviews corroborated documentation of copies of IEPs to parents.
- Parents report that school special education staff care about their children.
- Parents in the community are aware of and access child find, as demonstrated by parent referrals and statements.
- The parent focus group was a sincere sharing of positive experiences and concerns. Eleven parents attended.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- Students report attending IEP meetings.
- All students with disabilities in Morgan School District are served in the regular education classroom as much as possible, with accommodations and specialized instruction provided as needed.
- Special education staff demonstrated a willingness to learn and apply that knowledge.
- Progress notes were included in IEPs.
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) and behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) were being utilized consistently in some school settings.
- Extended school year (ESY) decisions were documented on IEPs.
- Related services were listed on IEPs.

Transitions

- Morgan School District has excellent coordination with Early Intervention.
- SEOPs are held at the Middle School and High School with each student annually.
- Part C to Part B transition planning meetings included LEA representative participation.
- Part C IEP teams considered IFSP, through the use of review of existing data form.
- Part C representatives were invited to initial IEP meeting, when appropriate.
- Students were invited to and participate in IEP meetings.
- Student input is considered and documented when developing the school to post-school transition plan.
- Transition plans included in special education files, when appropriate.

Disproportionality

• Morgan School District reported 1 suspension/expulsion for longer than 10 days during the 2004-2005 school year.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ✓ Pre-Referral Interventions form did not document at least 2 classroom interventions implemented before referral nor document at least 2 classroom interventions failed, with supporting data.
- ✓ Off-Site Data not all submitted/in compliance: IEP forms and child find.
- ✓ Copies to parents of Review of Existing Evaluation Data form and Evaluation Summary Reports not documented due to missing form in or no documentation that copy was given.
- ✓ Notice of Meeting for IEP meetings, placement meetings, and eligibility meetings missing or incomplete.
- ✓ Prior Written Notice of eligibility missing.
- ✓ Eligibility Determination did not document participation by regular education teacher.
- ✓ Evaluation Procedures not followed: review of existing evaluation form missing, students were not assessed in all areas related to suspected disability and sufficiently comprehensive to identify needs, Evaluation Summary Report missing or did not include data, variety of assessment tools and strategies not used to gather relevant functional information in determining eligibility,
- ✓ Evaluation Procedures for SLD classification did not include the use of an observation of the student's academic performance in the regular classroom setting, did not include an evaluation summary report that documents the relevant behavior noted during the observation, did not include an evaluation summary report that documents the description of the instructional environment in which the observation took place, did not include a confirmation of each identified deficit by at least 2 measures, did not include an evaluation summary report that documents the basis for making the determination, did not include an evaluation summary report that documents the written signature of each team member, and did not include an evaluation summary report signed by a team of qualified professionals, including the regular education teacher, to determine eligibility.
- ✓ IEP Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements did not include how the disability affects involvement/progress in the general curriculum, did not document the participation of the regular education teacher, did not include specific special education services, and did not document goals, services, and amount of time needed if ESY was selected.
- ✓ Placement decisions blank or not addressed.
- ✓ Timelines for IEP review/revision and reevaluation exceeded.
- ✓ No documentation of parents informed of Part B rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ Transition plan courses of study did not address specific student needs.

^{*}These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.